



NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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From the offices of Reps. Kate Brophy McGee & Brenda Barton

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BROPHY MCGEE & BARTON ASSEMBLE STAKEHOLDERS TO REVIEW ANIMAL CRUELTY STATUTES

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (July 16, 2014) – Rep. Kate Brophy McGee, R-Dist. 28, and Rep. Brenda Barton, R-Dist. 06, are assembling stakeholders to review existing animal cruelty statutes and consider draft legislation to set safety standards for pet boarding facilities.

The initiative is in response to an incident this past June at a Gilbert boarding facility where 23 dogs died. Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Animal Crimes Investigations Unit (ACIU) is still looking into the circumstances of the deaths.

"The stakeholder group will focus on policies that ensure when people entrust their beloved pets to a boarding facility, they will be safe and properly cared for," said Rep. Brophy McGee.

Rep. Brophy McGee and representatives for Sheriff Joe Arpaio have met to discuss the issue, and plans are underway to hold a news conference the week of July 21.

"I look forward to working with the Sheriff Arpaio," said Rep. Barton. "Sheriff Joe and ACIU have been very active in fighting domestic pet abuse, and the sheriff has worked to help legislation pass that protects all animals."

In addition to members from the Legislature and law enforcement, the stakeholder group will include representatives for small and large pet boarding businesses, county government and animal welfare groups.

"This is a very complicated issue with many interests," said Rep. Brophy McGee. "Ultimately the goal is to protect our pets, not interfere or unduly burden businesses that operate properly."

Rep. Brenda Barton, R-Payson, who chairs the House Agriculture and Water Committee, noted that the animal cruelty legislation she sponsored last session, House Bill 2587, is an important piece of the puzzle.

"Law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys have told me that existing statutes make it hard for them to investigate and prosecute animal cruelty and neglect," said Rep. Barton. "We need to find a way to strengthen the laws so animals are protected."

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